

# The State of South Carolina's Forests



## FOREST AREA



- South Carolina has 12.9 million acres of forestland. This is 67% of the state's total land area.
- Hardwood timber types occupy over 54% of the state's forestland. Pines types occupy 46%.
- South Carolina's forestland acreage remains stable, averaging 12.6 million acres since 1968.
- The 2006 forest inventory found that there are over 2 million more acres of forestland than there were in the first inventory in 1936.

## ECONOMIC IMPACT



- Forestry is #1 among manufacturing industries in jobs (44,708) and payroll (\$2.4 billion).
- The total economic impact of South Carolina's forest industry is \$17.45 billion annually.
- South Carolina exports about \$1 billion in forest products each year.
- Timber is the state's #1 agricultural commodity at \$870 million annually.

## FOREST OWNERSHIP



- 88% of South Carolina's forests are privately owned.
- 67% of private forests are family-owned.
- The average "family forest" is 65 acres. 74% of these owners live on the land.
- In 2006, forest industries owned 1.4 million acres, down 29% since 2001 and continuing to decrease.
- Public agencies control 12% of South Carolina's forests.

## FOREST INVENTORY



- South Carolina's forests now contain 21.5 billion cubic feet of wood, more than at any time in the past century.
- The state's forests, both hardwood and softwood, are growing significantly more wood than is being harvested.
- Net annual softwood growth is double pre-hurricane Hugo growth rates. The present annual growth of 817 million cubic feet per year is the highest ever recorded.
- Net annual hardwood growth rates have steadily increased since Hurricane Hugo. The present annual growth of 387 million cubic feet per year is approaching the highest ever recorded.

## FOREST ECOSYSTEM HEALTH



- The state's forested watersheds fulfill a critical resource role as the primary supplier of clean public water.
- South Carolina's forested watersheds are well managed as documented by a 98% compliance rating with state water quality guidelines.
- The state's forests produce timber and jobs while simultaneously serving as a backdrop for a desirable quality of life. In addition to beautiful landscapes, forests provide clean water, abundant wildlife, recreation, carbon storage and soil protection.

*Sources: South Carolina Forestry Commission (SCFC) and USDA Forest Service Forest Inventory and Analysis (FIA)*

*For more information about South Carolina's Forest Inventory Analysis, contact the SC Forestry Commission: 803-896-8800.*

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